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UNCLAS YEREVAN 001192

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

STATE FOR EUR/CACEN; NP/ECC

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: TRGY KNNP AM IAEA

SUBJECT: ARMENIAN GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO DEMARCHE TO U.S.

IAEA ADDITIONAL PROTOCOL

Ref: State 81669

¶1. (U) Sensitive but unclassified. Please protect accordingly.

DEMARCHE DELIVERED

¶2. (SBU) On May 4, we presented talking points per reftel regarding the U.S. Senate approval of the US-IAEA Additional protocol. Ashot Martirosyan, Head of the Armenian Nuclear Regulatory Agency (ANRA) officially received the demarche. Martirosyan acknowledged the U.S. Senate approval and stated that the Armenian Parliament was scheduled to ratify the IAEA additional protocol in June or July of 2004.

CURRENT STATUS OF ANRA

¶3. (SBU) Martirosyan told us that the ANRA was down to 16 employees, explaining that this was due to low salaries, (about USD 100 to 150), Armenian language requirements, and restrictive Armenian civil service hiring procedures. Martirosyan told us that the lack of adequate staff would make it difficult for ANRA to effectively oversee the Armenian Nuclear Power Plant and properly catalogue and license all of the radioactive sources in Armenia.

COMMENT

¶4. (SBU) It is obvious that ANRA as a regulatory body will have serious difficulties in the near future regulating the nuclear power plant and the several hundred other radioactive sources in Armenia. ANRA will also likely continue to lose specialists due to the low salaries and fail to attract new ones because of bureaucratic hiring difficulties.

ORDWAY